

REMARKS

Claims 1-40 are pending and stand rejected and are therefore at issue.

Support for the Amendments

Claims 1, 9, and 17 are amended to recite that “one or more of the predicted words or phrases include at least one syllable beyond the one or more syllables of the phonetic symbol categories specified by the signals generated by the user.” Such is supported at least by Figures 5 and 15 and accompanying text in the Specification as originally filed. In Figure 5, pressing a single key to represent a “k” consonant results in prediction of “kurai”, the second syllable being beyond the one syllable specified by the user. In Figure 15, the user has specified syllables of the following consonant groups: null, “r,” “k,” “t,” null, and “k.” The predicted text includes syllables of those groups and additional syllables beyond those specified by the user: “arigato gozaimasu,” the specified syllables only accounting for “arigato go-.”

Claims 2, 10, and 18 are amended to recite that “the one or more phonetic symbol categories are each associated with a respective distinct consonant by including all syllables that include the respective distinct consonant.” Such is supported at least by Figure 2 and accompanying text in the Specification as originally filed.

Claims 7, 15, and 23 are amended to find proper antecedent basis for “predicted words or phrases” in Claims 1, 9, and 17, respectively.

Claims 29, 33, and 37 are amended to recite that “the phonetic symbol categories are respective distinct rows of Japanese kana as arranged in the Japanese fifty sounds table.” Such is supported at least by Figure 2 and accompanying text in the Specification as originally filed.

No new matter is added by this Amendment.

The Claims Are Allowable Over the Cited Art

Nakayama et al. in View of Krueger et al.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-24, 27, and 29-40 as unpatentable over Nakayama et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,531,119) in view of Krueger et al. (U.S. Patent 5,999,950). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection in view of this Amendment.

Applicants' amended Claim 1 recites: “presenting the one or more predicted words or phrases to the user for selection; wherein one or more of the predicted words or phrases include at least one syllable beyond the one or more syllables of the phonetic symbol categories specified by the signals generated by the user.” As a teaching of “predicted words,” the Examiner cited Nakayama et al. at column 2, lines 51-62. There is nothing in the cited language of Nakayama et al. to suggest anything more than a straight kana-to-kanji conversion in which candidate kanji only include syllables represented by user-specified kana. As a matter of review, it should be noted that kana represent phonetic syllables while kanji represent ideographs derived from Chinese ideographs. An analog in English might be conversion of a phonetic spelling of “rīt” to one of the matching English words “right,” “write,” “rite,” and “Wright.” Accordingly, Applicants find no teaching or suggestion in Nakayama et al. of “presenting ... one or more of the predicted words or phrases include at least one syllable beyond the one or more syllables of the phonetic symbol categories specified by the signals generated by the user” as recited by Claim 1 as amended.

Applicant similarly finds no teaching of suggest of the same in Krueger et al. Accordingly, Claim 1 is allowable over any combination of Nakayama et al. with Krueger et al., assuming arguendo that such combination is properly motivated in the prior art.

All pending claims directly or indirectly recite similar limitations to those discussed above with respect to Claim 1 and are therefore similarly allowable over Nakayama et al. and Krueger et al.

Claims 2, 10, and 18 recite that “the one or more phonetic symbol categories are each associated with a respective distinct consonant by including all syllables that include the respective distinct consonant.” The Examiner cited Nakayama et al. at column 3, lines 6-10, as teaching association of each phonetic symbol category with a respective consonant. What Nakayama et al. teach in that passage is the association of individual kana with respective keys of an English-based keyboard, identifying keys by corresponding letters “J, K, L, +, U, I, O, P”. As amended, Claims 2, 10, and 18 make it clear that the consonant with which each phonetic symbol category is associated is included in the member syllables of the phonetic symbol category, not merely an association with letters printed on keys on a keyboard.

Nakayama et al. teach a different key for each individual kana. In addition, Nakayama et al. specifically teach away from associating all syllables that include a particular consonant into a single phonetic symbol category. For example, consider the consonant “k”. Nakayama et al. show the syllable “ka” associated with the “T” key (Figure 3 of Nakayama et al.), the syllable “ki” associated with the “G” key, the syllable “ku” associated with the “H” key, the syllable “ke” associated with the “*” key, and the syllable “ko” associated with the “B” key. Thus, there are no user-generated signals representing the phonetic symbol category associated with the “k”

consonant. To the extent each key can be considered representative of different phonetic symbol categories, the consonants with which each phonetic symbol categories are not “distinct” as recited by Claims 2, 10, and 18 as amended.

Krueger et al. teach the same: different keys for different kana that include the same consonant. In particular, Krueger et al. show the following kana associated with separate keys in the keyboard of Figure 5:

<i>Kana</i>	<i>Syllable</i>
か	ka
き	ki
く	ku
け	ke
こ	ko

These kana associated with the same consonant, i.e., “k”, are also shown in Figure 3 of Krueger et al. Thus, similar to the discussed above with respect to Nakayama et al., there are no user-generated signals representing the phonetic symbol category associated with the “k” consonant. To the extent each key can be considered representative of different phonetic symbol categories, the consonants with which each phonetic symbol categories are not “distinct” as recited by Claims 2, 10, and 18 as amended.

Accordingly, Claims 2, 10, and 18 are allowable over any combination of Nakayama et al. and Krueger et al., assuming arguendo such combination is properly motivated in the prior art, for reasons independent of those given above with respect to Claim 1. Claims 3-4, 11-12, and 19-20 depend from Claims 2, 10, and 18, respectively, and are therefore similarly allowable.

Nakayama et al. and Krueger et al. Further in View of Ho et al.

The Examiner rejected Claims 25-26 and 28 as being unpatentable over Nakayama et al. and Krueger et al. in view of Ho et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,307,541). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection in view of this Amendment.

Of the various recited limitations discussed above as not taught or suggested by Nakayama et al., the Examiner has cited none of those in Ho et al. Accordingly, any combination of Ho et al. with Nakayama et al. would be missing those same limitations, assuming arguendo that such combination was properly motivated in the prior art. Accordingly, Claims 25-26 and 28 are allowable over Nakayama et al. and Ho et al.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1-40 are now in a condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner's next action is other than for allowance of Claims 1-40, or if the Examiner has any questions or comments with respect to the above-identified case, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned at (510) 336-1100.

Respectfully submitted,

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